

MEETING MINUTES
Berkley Downtown Development Authority
Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Berkley Public Safety Building, 2nd Floor Conference Room
Wednesday, July 11, 2007

UNOFFICIAL

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** No quorum was present, and the meeting was not officially called to order.
- II. **DETERMINATION OF ATTENDANCE:** Attendance was not called in absence of a quorum.
- III. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** The agenda was not approved in absence of a quorum.
- IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
 - A. **Regular Meeting of June 13, 2007:** Without a quorum, approval of the minutes was deferred.
- V. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**
 - A. **Communications: Keith Logsdon** – None.
 - B. **Introduction of First Time Visitors:** Jason Ryan of Virtualeyes was attending to make a presentation to the Board.
- VI. **CHAIRPERSON'S UPDATE:** Nothing to report.
- VII. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**
 - A. **Election of Officers:** Deferred.
- VIII. **NEW BUSINESS:**
 - A. **Presentation from Jason Ryan of Virtualeyes:** Ryan said his company, Virtualeyes, is developing an Internet community called "CPlanet.com." Their Web application complements Web sites like DDAs, convention and visitor bureaus, and Chambers of Commerce. Rochester and Royal Oak, as well as other communities in the metro area, use it now. Virtualeyes creates 2-dimensional maps, 3-D city models, and interactive directories with any type of categories that can be searched (such as a special kind of restaurant or available property of a certain size). The search results can be displayed with driving directions using Google Maps. Rochester hired them to do their whole Web site. Logsdon asked if the businesses pay a fee for the service, and Ryan said no, they work from the data given to them by their client (in this case, the DDA). The client chooses who's included, such as Chamber members for a Chamber of Commerce site or all the businesses in the DDA district for a DDA site. Individual businesses can pay to upgrade and enhance their offerings on the site. If they don't already have a Web site, Virtualeyes can create a page for them linked to the larger site at a cost of \$750.00 per year and \$500.00 to renew after the first year. Farrington asked if the business would have any control over their content. Ryan responded that the DDA or business has content control during the build portion. They can also build a 3-D interactive downtown tour that can be used to recruit businesses to a community and show off available space. The price (not including the model) to the DDA is \$900.00 initially, and \$600.00 to renew. They can take business data from an Excel spreadsheet and convert it and make a page in @two days (without animation). Geinzer said he invited Ryan so the Board could view what they can do as a way to add features to the Web site. An online directory is a common tool that municipalities use. Individual businesses can upgrade by contracting directly with Virtualeyes. Geinzer would like to be able to track visitor information as well as having downtown/city events on the DDA site, although some events are listed on the City's Web site now. Barbuscak asked him if the mapping/search features offered would help him and Brenda Cole and if it would cost more than \$900.00 to develop a similar feature in-house. Geinzer said it would definitely help them develop the Web site the way they would like to and it would probably cost more in-house. Many other cities are using the service and are very pleased with it. Ryan said CPlanet.com will have city guides, and the Rochester DDA hired them to build them a linked MySpace profile (third most popular Web site in the nation). Barbuscak asked Geinzer if he would recommend using Virtualeyes' service, and Geinzer responded affirmatively. Semonian said

he thought it was a great idea. Logsdon asked Geinzer if he'd had conversations with other cities about them. Geinzer said not in depth, but he could. Dyer, Barbuscak, and Farrington concurred the idea is worth pursuing. Geinzer will send Virtualeyes links and a brief summary of what was discussed to the Board so they can check out the service on their own. He would like to come back to the Board for approval when the Web redesign is ready for launch. Sabuda asked Ryan how many people are on staff, and Ryan said they have seven professionals and two interns, as well as a physical office in Troy. Sabuda questioned awarding the contract without bidding it out because City Council will question it, but at the price of \$900.00 for professional services, bidding is not mandatory. Geinzer also believes that they are a sole source for the service, but Sabuda said he disagreed. Barbuscak noted that Sabuda has a valid point and his advice is good, but the Board was still on firm ground not to send it out for bid.

B. DDA Website Redesign: Geinzer gave a condensed report because of the lack of quorum. He and Brenda Cole have been updating the Web site, condensing the information into four categories with submenus. Logsdon asked him how much of the Web site work is being done by him and how much by Brenda Cole, and Geinzer said a little of both, but it's not taking that much time. He's working on the e-newsletter concept and wants to add more visuals and tools to the site. Most Web visitors want community information rather than information about the DDA. Farrington asked him if anyone is editing his work, noting a second set of eyes is always a good idea. Geinzer responded that when his Web site model is ready for review, he'll send a link to the Board so they can look it over and make comments and suggestions. Logsdon said for now to have Farrington review anything specific. He also asked Geinzer to find out how much time Brenda is expending monthly, because the DDA is reimbursing the City for her work. The City purchased software at their own expense to use on their Web site and the DDA site.

C. TIF/Development Plan, Redevelopment & Design Study RFP: Geinzer noted he has been working on the draft RFP for the TIF plan update and design guidelines and had e-mailed that to the Board, but they couldn't move forward on it without a quorum. The RFP covers two items: the development and TIF plan update (create a flexible, living document). They need to update the projects list and incorporate Main Street language, with clear language about marketing and promotion. The broad-based document should encompass everything the DDA would like to do. The current plan (and the DDA) expires in 2020, and the Board needs to consider extending that time frame. They also need to look at indebtedness. Geinzer and Logsdon had also discussed a redevelopment and design study, with the redevelopment portion an extension of the master plan focused on the DDA district. Downtown housing demand is one of the considerations. The Michigan Blueprints program gives a step by step project implementation process. Design guidelines, which will be the overseeing document of a future façade program, have already been tentatively addressed by Vansen, who put together a pamphlet and application form. Geinzer said his proposed schedule for the plans was not relevant any more because the Board couldn't make an RFP decision without a quorum. Under his proposed schedule, proposals would come back in about three weeks after sending out the RFP, then the Board would select finalists at their Board meeting, the finalists would be interviewed (maybe by a subcommittee or in a special meeting), the vendor approved and sent to Council with a recommendation, and then a contract would be negotiated and the process started. Logsdon suggested the whole process should be moved back a month, taking summer vacations into account. Geinzer anticipated a November/December starting date for the project. He asked Board members to look closely at the draft before the August meeting. Logsdon asked him if the RFP deals with the tie-in with the City master plan. Geinzer responded not in real detail but that part of the proposal is to evaluate past studies (including the new master plan). Sabuda noted that a community advisory board would have input on the new plan because it's in the law. Geinzer concurred that there should be public input, but he thought the requirement that a citizens committee be appointed was only true if there are 100 residents in the DDA district, and he thought there probably weren't in Berkley. Sabuda recommended hiring a prominent law firm like Miller Canfield to review the plan. Logsdon noted that John Staran has a lot of municipal law experience and they could use his expertise, but Sabuda said Miller Canfield is the firm most cities used when bonding. Barbuscak asked Geinzer for an estimate of the consultant cost. Geinzer said he had a preliminary estimate from LSL of \$20,000-\$30,000 (at the low end). That's why he would like the components of the bid broken down. Logsdon said he thought the \$30,000 estimate was for writing a TIF plan, and

since the plan just needs updating, the cost should be lower. Funds for the consultant will come out of the ad valorem, and it is a line item in the budget. Barbuscak asked if there might be a step to take before hiring a planner, maybe working in-house using documents already in hand. Geinzer said yes, and it could be even more than preliminary. He had spoken with Sabuda about doing the TIF plan and development plan in-house, and maybe the redevelopment plan, depending on focus. They could also partner with the Planning Commission and identify projects in the master plan. Drawings cost money, however. Geinzer suggested forming a subcommittee with input from Sabuda and Vansen to evaluate how much can be done in-house. He said they could still send out an RFP with limitations. Logsdon thought getting proposals might help make a final decision on what can be done in-house. Novitsky pointed out that there is a great deal of collective professional expertise in the members of the Planning Commission, and they have been working on these issues for quite some time. He would be happy to share the documents they have with the DDA. Logsdon suggested Planning Commission members be included on the committee. Geinzer noted the redevelopment plan is an enhancement of the master plan. Barbuscak suggested the DDA needed to live within its budget, and they only have @\$39,000 a year in ad valorem funds coming in per year. Geinzer noted there is a budget line item for 2007/08 for \$25,000.00 for a plan update and \$5,000.00 for a façade grant consultant (design guidelines handbook). Barbuscak suggested that before committing to spending that on an outside consultant, they should consider what preliminary work can be done using the available information. Additionally, getting proposals will eat up valuable time. Logsdon reiterated that getting proposals would help decide how to use the information they already have. Novitsky suggested hiring LSL on an hourly basis to mediate with the committee and Planning Commission and bring them to consensus. Geinzer asked Sabuda if they could do that without a competitive bid process. Sabuda responded that it was a professional service, but he thought they should get bids. Logsdon cited LSL's experience with the master plan, but Sabuda said that would come out in the bid process, and he thought it still didn't hurt to send out the RFP. Logsdon said he liked Novitsky's suggestion. The committee will do the preliminary work and the professionals come in to finish up details. Sabuda said he had done two plans, in Wyandotte and Inkster. Barbuscak asked him if they were updates like Berkley's. Sabuda said Inkster was but Wyandotte was from the beginning. He noted the hardest part of doing the plan is choosing projects. Barbuscak said that since they just need to update this plan, it shouldn't be that complicated. Logsdon noted that the new component is the detailed downtown master plan expanding on the new master plan. There's no mention of downtown catalytic projects in the current TIF plan. Logsdon suggested forming a committee to meet with the Planning Commission in a work session soon and prioritize the master plan list. Sabuda suggested that all they need to do is amend page 14 of the current development plan. Geinzer added that work needs to be done on the language that would allow for some of the changes the DDA is undergoing, including use of TIF funds. Sabuda said working with Vansen is key. Novitsky noted that RFPs can be great waste of time to respond to, often with no chance of getting the job. Logsdon suggested forming a committee to meet with the Planning Commission to review development plan information. Novitsky thought the group could tailor an RFP in one meeting. Dyer, Barbuscak, and Logsdon volunteered.

D. '07-'08 Fiscal Year Parking Lot Project: Geinzer asked if the Board wanted to move forward with anything. He said they needed to identify where the upcoming parking lot project south of 12 Mile is going (a three-block stretch). The 2007/08 budget has \$220,000 set aside, which he noted is not a lot of money for parking lots. Option 1 is just paving, or turning the project into a three-year parking lot program, focusing on one block at a time, with paving and parking lot enhancements. Or they could phase improvements: paving, a landscape framework, then enhancements. He said the Board needed to think about how to approach the project. HRC can do the design work. In order to get started in the next spring construction season, they need to make decisions now. Logsdon noted that project ties in directly with the downtown plan, and it might be premature to move until the development plan committee meets. Geinzer thought they would have to spend the budgeted funds before the end of the fiscal year, but Sabuda noted they wouldn't lose the money if not used before the end of the fiscal year. It can be carried forward. Barbuscak said he thought the budgeted amount was for design, not concrete, since it ties in with one of the master plan's catalytic projects. He sees the DDA's part as the design function. Geinzer said he thought there was frustration about not getting anything done, and producing another plan wouldn't give them something physical to show.

He noted one of the things DDAs do is parking lots. Barbuscak said he didn't know where Geinzer got that impression because the DDA had several finished projects to show for their efforts over the years. Dyer suggested that the subcommittee just formed would be dealing with these questions when they meet.

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- A. Treasury/Budget/Finance: Alan Semonian, Larry Gallagher, John McGovern – No report.**
- B. Development: Jane Bais-DiSessa – Absent – no report.**
- C. Build Berkley/B.B.A.T.: Keith Logsdon – No report.**
- D. Business Recruitment: No report.**
- E. Banners/Appearance: John Barbuscak – No report.**
- F. Newsletter: John Barbuscak – No report.**
- G. Web Site: See previous discussion.**

X. LIAISON REPORTS:

- A. City Council Liaison: No report.**
- B. Planning Commission Liaison: No further report.**
- C. Beautification Committee Liaison: Absent – no report.**
- D. Chamber of Commerce Liaison: Absent – no report.**
- E. Zoning Board of Appeals Liaison: Absent – no report.**

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was never called to order for lack of a quorum, and no motion was needed to adjourn.